

## **OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

### **Request for Applications for a Grant to Promote District of Columbia Self Determination, Voting Rights or Statehood**

**Release Date:** Friday, July 15, 2011

**Applications Due:** Monday, August 15, 2011 at Noon

#### **SECTION I: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**

The Office of the Secretary of the District of Columbia (OS) hereby invites the submission of applications to provide support for Mayor Vincent C. Gray's initiatives to achieve self-determination, budget and legislative autonomy, full voting rights in the United States Congress or statehood for the District of Columbia.

#### **Background**

The residents of the District of Columbia are United States citizens who serve in the military and pay federal taxes, but have been denied basic liberties and the same democratic rights as other states and municipalities, including budget and legislative autonomy, and full voting representation in the United States House of Representative and the United States Senate.

The District of Columbia Home Rule Act of 1973 provided limited "Home Rule" for the District by allowing election of a Mayor and Council of the District of Columbia. Over the past 39 years, the District's elected officials and various groups have pursued strategies to raise awareness and secure changes in law to authorize DC voting representatives to the U.S. House of Representatives and U. S. Senate and legislative autonomy. Unfortunately, full democracy has been derailed by non-germane proposals, riders on appropriations bills and failure to garner enough support for enactment.

For over a decade, the District has allocated funds to nonprofit organizations for educating the public in Washington, DC and around the nation and pursuing strategies that highlight the continued lack of full democracy in the nation's capital. In addition, since 1990 District residents have elected a "shadow" delegation to Congress in order to promote statehood.

Historically, the Office of the Secretary has been charged with responsibility for managing the funds allocated for activities to gain full democracy for DC residents. For Fiscal Year

2011, the Council of the District of Columbia approved limited grant-making authority for the Office of the Secretary to issue competitive grants to promote voting rights and statehood in the District of Columbia.

### **Purpose of Program**

The objective of this grant is to strengthen support for democracy for the citizens of the District through activities that promote District voting representation in Congress, Statehood, legislative and budget autonomy or full democracy. The task may include outreach and education across the country, including, but not limited to elected officials, and efforts to measure support of local residents. The ultimate goal is to attain a vote for District of Columbia residents in the United States Congress, lay the foundation for DC Statehood and take other actions that support full democracy. The more realistic goal of this program is that the grantee(s) increase nationwide support for District voting rights and Statehood.

This grant program is funded with Fiscal Year 2011 funds, and all grants must be allocated by September 30, 2011. Quarterly reports on the use of the grant funds must be submitted to the Office of the Secretary, with a full accounting provided to the Office of the Secretary within nine months of receipt of the grant funds.

### **SECTION II: AWARD INFORMATION**

One or more grants will be awarded on a competitive basis from the \$150,000 in District funds that will be available for this grant. The Notice of Funding Availability was published in the *DC Register* on Friday, July 1, 2011, and this Request for Applications (RFA) was released on July 15, 2011, 14 days after the date the Notice of Funding Availability was published. This grant process conforms to the guidelines established in the Grants Manual of the Office of Partnerships and Grant Services (which is available at <http://opgs.dc.gov>).

All funds will be disbursed upon award of the grant(s), with full accounting required quarterly. All proposals must include a detailed description of how the funds will be spent, a project plan, information on the organization and documentation of its nonprofit status.

### **SECTION III: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

Eligibility for this grant is restricted to nonprofit organizations with a 501(c)(3) certification and a current District of Columbia license, and that do not owe any money to the District government, and that have a history of supporting DC voting rights and/or statehood.

#### **SECTION IV: APPLICATION & SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

This RFA is posted at <http://os.dc.gov> and <http://opgs.dc.gov>. Requests for copies of this RFA may also be made to: 202-727-6306, [secretary@dc.gov](mailto:secretary@dc.gov), or by sending a letter to: Secretary of the District of Columbia, 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 419, Washington, DC 20004.

#### **Application Forms and Content**

**All applications will be judged against the following requirements:**

1. All proposals must be written in clear, concise, grammatically correct language. Narrative shall not exceed 1,000 words, and must include answers to all the requirements specified in this RFA.
2. There is no set form on which applications must be written, but brevity and clarity are appreciated.
3. The grantee shall focus efforts on education and outreach to residents of the 50 states, not just members of Congress, or voter education within the District of Columbia.
4. Grantee's efforts shall not consist entirely of paid media advertisements.
5. Proposal must be specific as to how funds will be expended, including:
  - a. Names of all staff proposed to work on this program;
  - b. Justification of the need for grant funds;
  - c. Specific activities for which funds will be used;
  - d. Agreement to submit all deliverables listed in section VI; and
  - e. Performance measures and evaluation plans.
6. All certifications listed in the Application Process section must be included.

#### **Application Process & Requirements**

**Responses to this RFA shall be submitted via email to [secretary@dc.gov](mailto:secretary@dc.gov).**

The following criteria for an application must be met (applications that do not meet the requirements specified below will be disqualified from consideration):

1. All proposals shall include only written narrative, with no additional input (such as DVDs, videos, etc.) reviewed.

2. All files submitted shall be in any of the following formats: MS Word 2003 or 2007, pdf, MS Excel, html, MS Publisher or any format compatible with those formats.
3. Not included in the 1,000 word narrative, but also necessary are:
  - a. the Employer Identification Number or Federal Tax Identification Number of the organization;
  - b. the website and main contact information for the organization;
  - c. a list of the Board of Directors of the organization (if not listed on the website);
  - d. one-paragraph biographies of all proposed project staff; and
  - e. the web address of the organizations most recent Form 990 submission to the Internal Revenue Service.
4. Copies (or weblinks thereto) of its most recent and complete set of audited or unaudited financial statements available for the organization. [If audited financial statements have never been prepared due to the size or newness of an organization, the applicant must provide an organizational budget, a statement of sources and uses of funds, and a balance sheet certified by an authorized representative of the organization, and any letters, filings, etc. submitted to the IRS within the three (3) years before the date of the grant application.]
5. Evidence of being a 501(c)(3) organization and a current business license, and copies of any correspondence received from the IRS within the three (3) years preceding the grant application that relates to the organization's tax status (e.g. suspension, revocation, recertification, etc.).
6. Application narrative shall be accompanied by a "Statement of Certification," the truth of which is certified by the Executive Director or the Chair of the Board of Directors of the applicant organization, which states:
  - a. The individuals, by name, title, address, email, and phone number who are authorized to negotiate with the Office of the Secretary on behalf of the organization;
  - b. That the applicant is able to maintain adequate files and records and can and will meet all reporting requirements;
  - c. That all fiscal records are kept in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and account for all funds, tangible assets, revenue, and expenditures whatsoever; that all fiscal records are accurate, complete and current at all times; and that these records will be made available for audit and inspection as required;
  - d. That the applicant is current on payment of all federal and District taxes, including Unemployment Insurance taxes and Workers' Compensation premiums. This statement of certification shall be accompanied by a

certificate from the District of Columbia Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR) stating that the entity has complied with the filing requirements of District of Columbia tax laws and has paid taxes due to the District of Columbia, or is in compliance with any payment agreement with OTR;

- e. That the applicant has the demonstrated administrative and financial capability to provide and manage the proposed services and ensure an adequate administrative, performance and audit trail;
- f. That the applicant is not proposed for debarment or presently debarred, suspended, or declared ineligible, as required by Executive Order 12549, "Debarment and Suspension," and implemented by 2 CFR 180, for prospective participants in primary covered transactions and is not proposed for debarment or presently debarred as a result of any actions by the District of Columbia Contract Appeals Board, the Office of Contracting and Procurement, or any other District contract-regulating agency;
- g. That the applicant has the financial resources and technical expertise necessary for the production, construction, equipment and facilities adequate to perform the program, or the ability to obtain them;
- h. That the applicant has the necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls, and technical skills to implement the program, or the ability to obtain them;
- i. That the applicant has the ability to comply with the required performance schedule, taking into consideration all existing and reasonably expected commercial and governmental business commitments;
- j. That the applicant has a satisfactory record performing similar activities as detailed in the award;
- k. That the applicant has a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics;
- l. That the applicant is in compliance with the applicable District licensing and tax laws and regulations;
- m. That the applicant complies with provisions of the Drug-Free Workplace Act;
- n. That the applicant meets all other qualifications and eligibility criteria necessary to receive an award under applicable laws and regulations;
- o. The grantee agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Government of the District of Columbia and its authorized officers, employees, agents and volunteers from any and all claims, actions, losses, damages, and/or liability arising out of this grant from any cause whatsoever, including the acts, errors or omissions of any person and for

- any costs or expenses incurred by the District on account of any claim therefore, except where such indemnification is prohibited by law; and
- p. If any of the organization's officers, partners, principals, members, associates or key employees, within the last three (3) years prior to the date of the application, has:
- i. been indicted or had charges brought against them (if still pending) and/or been convicted of (a) any crime or offense arising directly or indirectly from the conduct of the applicant's organization or (b) any crime or offense involving financial misconduct or fraud, or
  - ii. been the subject of legal proceedings arising directly from the provision of services by the organization and if the response is in the affirmative, the applicant shall fully describe any such indictments, charges, convictions, or legal proceedings (and the status and disposition thereof) and surrounding circumstances in writing and provide documentation of the circumstances.

## **Timeline**

All applications shall be submitted by email to [secretary@dc.gov](mailto:secretary@dc.gov) by Noon on August 15, 2011. The Office of the Secretary of the District of Columbia is not responsible for misdirected email or failure of the applicant to comply with this timeline.

## **Terms and Conditions**

1. Funding for this award is contingent on the continued funding from the grantor, including possible funding restrictions pursuant to the federal Anti-Deficiency Act, 31 U.S.C. §§ 1341, 1342, 1349-51, and 1511-1519 (2004); the District Anti-Deficiency Act, D.C. Official Code §§ 1-206.03(e), 47-105, and 47-355.01-355.08 (2001); and Section 446 of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, D.C. Official Code § 1-204.46 (2001). Nothing in this RFA shall create an obligation of the District in anticipation of an appropriation by Congress and/or the Council of the District of Columbia (the "Council") for such purpose as described in the RFA. The District's legal liability for any payment pursuant to this RFA shall not arise or obtain in advance of the lawful availability of appropriated funds for the applicable fiscal year as approved by Congress and/or the Council, and shall become null and void upon the lawful unavailability of such funds under these or other applicable statutes and regulations.
2. The Office of the Secretary reserves the right to accept or deny any or all applications if the Secretary determines it is in the best interests of the District

government to do so. Each applicant will be notified if that applicant's proposal is rejected or fails to meet the criteria. Any outstanding RFA may be suspended or terminated at any time pursuant to the policies set forth in the City-Wide Grants Manual and Sourcebook.

3. The Office of the Secretary reserves the right to issue addenda and/or amendments subsequent to the issuance of the RFA, or to rescind the RFA.
4. The Office of the Secretary shall not be liable for any costs incurred in the preparation of applications in response to the RFA. Applicant agrees that all costs incurred in developing the application are the applicant's sole responsibility.
5. The Office of the Secretary may conduct pre-award on-site visits to verify information submitted in the application and to determine if the applicant's facilities are appropriate for the services intended.
6. The Office of the Secretary may enter into negotiations with an applicant and adopt a firm funding amount or other revision of the applicant's proposal that may result from negotiations.
7. This grant is authorized by Section 1022 of D.C. Act 19-93, the "Office of the Secretary Limited Grant-Making Authority Emergency Act of 2011."
8. To receive an award, the selected grantee shall provide in writing the names of all of its insurance carriers and the type of insurance provided (e.g., its general liability insurance carrier and automobile insurance carrier, workers' compensation insurance carrier, fidelity bond holder (if applicable)), and, before execution of the award, a copy of the binder or cover sheet of their current policy for any policy that covers activities that might be undertaken in connection with performance of the grant, showing the limits of coverage and endorsements. All policies (except the workers' compensation, errors and omissions, and professional liability policies) that cover activities that might be undertaken in connection with the performance of the grant, shall contain additional endorsements naming the Government of the District of Columbia, and its officers, employees, agents and volunteers as additional named insured with respect to liability abilities arising out of the performance of services under the award. The grantee shall require their insurance carrier of the required coverage to waive all rights of subrogation against the District, its officers, employees, agents, volunteers, contractors and subcontractors.
9. If there are any conflicts between the terms and conditions of the RFA and any applicable federal or local law or regulation, or any ambiguity related thereto, then

the provisions of the applicable law or regulation shall control and it shall be the responsibility of the applicant to ensure compliance.

## **SECTION V: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

All proposals will be reviewed by a panel of three members including the Chief of Staff to the Mayor, the Secretary of the District of Columbia, and the Director of the Office of Policy and Legislative Affairs, or their designees. The ratings awarded each applicant shall be public information, and shall be made based on the following criteria:

1. Perceived ability to make progress toward increasing nationwide support for DC voting rights and/or statehood during the grant period – 50%.
2. Specificity and feasibility of proposed activities – 25%.
3. History of supporting DC voting rights efforts – 10%.
4. Specificity of performance measures – 10%.
5. Completing the application as instructed – 5%.

## **SECTION VI: AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

Grant award(s) will be announced on the Office of the Secretary website no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 16, 2011, at the latest. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email at the address from which the application was sent (unless otherwise specified) prior to the announcement of the winners. Disbursement of grant funds will occur as soon as practicable following the announcement of the selection of the awardee(s).

### **Deliverables**

Project requirements that must be submitted on or before due dates are:

1. A project plan with detailed expense projections for the amount requested. (Due within 15 calendar days of grant award.)
2. Progress reports detailing expenditures to date and summary of work completed shall be due every 90 days from award date, with the final report due June 29, 2012.
3. A final report on the form which will be provided to the grant recipient(s).



## **SECTION VII: AGENCY CONTACT**

All inquiries regarding this Request for Applications should be directed to:

Cynthia Brock-Smith  
Secretary of the District of Columbia  
[secretary@dc.gov](mailto:secretary@dc.gov) | 202-727-6306